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PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF HUNGARIAN RAILROADS

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[Graphs referred to are appended.]

The first Hungarian workers' competition was in the field of railroads, namely, the overhauling of 500 locomotives and 10,000 railroad cars.

In 1950, the Hungarian railroads carried 90 percent more freight and 154 percent more passenger traffic than in the years preceding World War II.

For the most part, the major rail arteries which will carry the projected increase in traffic have an obsolete track structure. So far, it has been possible to keep up smooth operations, but the antiquated track structure will not be able to carry a further traffic increase. Since World War I, very little overhauling has been done on the track structure and exceptionally heavy use during the world wars has aggravated the situation.

At the beginning of the Five-Year Plan, a 15-year program was worked out for the modernization of the existing track structure. Although the goal set for 1950 has not been completely fulfilled, still much obsolete track structure has been replaced with modern material. A further step in the modernization of trackage is the installation of modern safety devices, which began in the second half of 1949.

During 1950, the building of second tracks, the enlargement of several important railroad stations and marshalling yards, the rebuilding of the Danube bridge at Baja, as well as the building of new lines in connection with the Stalin Works and the development of new mines, required large expenditures. The electrification of the Budapest-Miskolc line was also started, and it is planned to complete this project by the end of 1954.

The increase in the rolling stock of the Hungarian State Railroads (MAV) is another important phase of the program. During the first year of the Five-Year Plan, MAV added the following to its rolling stock: 375-series steam locomotives, narrow-gage rail motor cars, four-axle passenger cars, Gzk-series

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boxcars, Jax-series open cars, three-axle tenders, and Kzm-series open freight cars of Polish manufacture. Pneumatic brakes were installed in the cars and, consequently, the MAV freight trains operate on pneumatic brakes. Several cars were equipped with 85-ton coupling and 100-ton draft gear and bumpers. The springs which raise the carrying capacity of the Izk-series cars from 21 tons to 25 tons were also ordered, as well as the dials designed to prevent hotboxes.

Passenger cars have been classified into seven types: ABa, ABca, and Ca for international traffic, Bak, Cak, and BCak for internal traffic, and Ha for local traffic. The classification of caboose, passenger, acid freight cars, and steam locomotives is in progress.

The steam locomotives were equipped with water-softening devices and blowers. Among the innovations placed on the 411-series locomotives are boilers with stay bolts, idling equipment, and Fono-type firegrates in three sections; also the smokeboxes and journal boxes were changed. Equipping of the 424-series locomotives with rock-wool insulation and Fono-type firegrates and of the 324-series locomotives with up-to-date pistons and roller-bearing steering mechanisms /sic/ was started. The 324- and 375-series compound locomotives are also being modernized.

Regarding the safety of rail transportation, in 1950, there was one death (including suicides) per 250,000 train-kilometers, and one injury per 200,000 train-kilometers. As compared with 1949, compensation paid by the railroad for damages to merchandise dropped 14 percent despite the fact that the volume shipped had considerably increased. Total compensations paid by the railroad amounted to 0.08 percent of the income derived from freight shipments.

The percentage of late trains has dropped as compared with 1949, but the 1950 results are still not satisfactory. In the fall of 1950, the employees of the railroad initiated a movement to cut the incidence of lateness even further. The lateness of passenger trains, especially of commuter trains, can be blamed partly on overcrowding. There are not enough passenger cars, and the management of the MAV is often forced to use rebuilt freight cars for passenger transportation.

Traveling speed is a deciding factor in the quality of freight transportation. The speed of express freight trains and of trains delivering LCL freight has been satisfactory. During the second half of 1950, the speed of the other freight trains was increased 15-20 percent; however, here, as well as in the field of passenger transportation, the speed has not yet reached the optimum.

Several other factors influence the efficient and economical operation of the railroad:

1. The Ratio of Freight to Dead Weight

During the past year, dead weight per passenger has improved only one percent. Since the utilization of passenger trains is, in general, satisfactory, any appreciable reduction in dead weight can come only after cars equipped with modern, light-weight seating facilities are put in use. Dead weight per freight ton has improved by 2.5 percent.

2. Turnaround Time

The freight-delivery capacity of a railroad increases when the time required for the two loadings of freight cars on a round trip decreases. Compared with 1949, the 1950 improvement in this respect exceeded 10 percent.

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3. Actual Coal Consumption

Since 1945, actual coal consumption at MAV has dropped steadily. Graph 1 shows the results of the past 3 years. The rise in September and October of 1950 was caused primarily by an inadequate coal mixture.

4. Productivity

Following the Soviet example, productivity is measured by passenger-kilometer and freight ton-kilometer performance per unit. Graph 2 shows productivity for 1949 and 1950.

Several contest movements have come into being among the railroad workers. Participants in the 2,000-tons Stakhanovite movement have pledged to have their locomotives move trains which are heavier than the weight norm established for the locomotive. In this manner the average load of freight trains during 1950 increased to such an extent that it was possible to save actual operation of 4,500 thousand-ton freight trains.

The purpose of the 500-kilometer movement is to increase a locomotive's productive runs. Fifty additional locomotives would normally be required to fulfill the gains made by the 63 percent of MAV's locomotives which are participating so far.

The movement to increase speed voluntarily was made possible by a flexible timetable issued by the railroad directorate. Daily, 100-150 freight trains operate at a speed higher than the basic speed prescribed by the timetable.

By the end of the Five-Year Plan, the railroads must be able to handle 50 percent more freight traffic and 35 percent more passenger traffic than in 1950. Large investments and many renovations are required to achieve this goal. Double tracks are needed on 200 kilometers of rail line, numerous major stations and two marshalling yards must be enlarged, the track structure has to be replaced on 450 kilometers of trackage, and several bridges, among them the Danube bridge at Ujpest, must be rebuilt. On several hundred kilometers of the main lines, automatic safety devices must be installed. Modern locomotives, several hundred passenger cars, and several thousand freight cars are needed to complete the railroad's rolling stock. The rail net must be expanded to link the new mining and industrial sites with the rest of the country's economy.

The development of the Hungarian railroads must take place both quantitatively and qualitatively. Difficulties have been caused in the past by lack of materials and delayed deliveries. Mechanization of many phases of railroad work could not be started because the needed machinery is not manufactured in the country and must be imported. It would be of great advantage if domestic factories could manufacture the small machine needed by the railroads, such as tie drills, rail drills, rail saws, etc.

[Graphs follow.]

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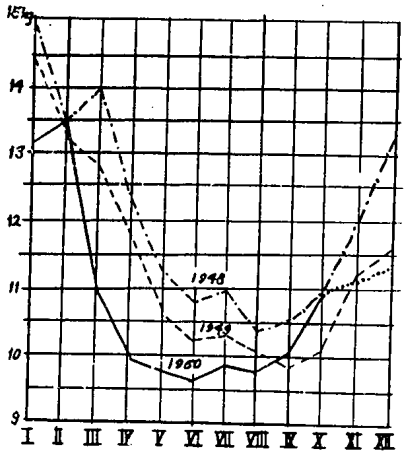
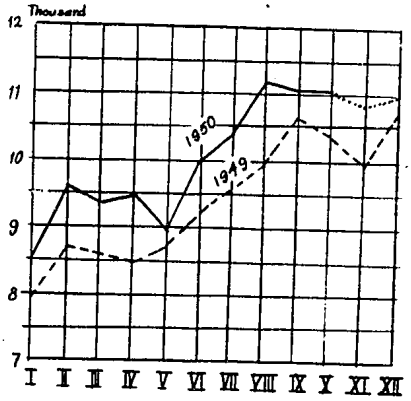


Graph 1.



Graph 2.

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